

**5 CLAIMS**

1. A computer node (16) comprising a synchronisation unit (21) for comparing network timing information for a first network (11) with network timing information for a second network (12) and for communicating to the first network (11) the sign of the difference between the first network timing information and the second network timing information to allow the first network (11) to alter its network timing information using the sign of the difference to allow the network timing difference between the first network (11) and the second network (12) to be reduced.
2. A computer node (16) according to claim 1, wherein the network timing information corresponds to the network clock rate.
3. A computer node (16) according to claim 1, wherein the network timing information corresponds to the phase of the network clock.
4. A computer node (16) according to any preceding claim, wherein the synchronisation unit (21) is arranged to provide the sign of the difference to the second network (12) to allow the second network (12) to alter its network timing information to allow the network timing difference between the first network (11) and the second network (12) to be reduced.
5. A computer node (16) according to any preceding claim, wherein the computer node (16) is arranged to be coupled to the first network (11).

5

6. A computer node (16) according to any preceding claim, wherein the computer node (16) is arranged to be coupled to the second network (12) via a second computer node (17).

10

7. A system comprising a first network (11), a second network (12) and a computer node (16) having a synchronisation unit (21) for comparing network timing information for the first network (11) with network timing information for the second network (12) and for communicating to the first network (11) the sign of the difference between the first network timing information and the second network timing information to allow the first network (11) to alter its network timing information using the sign of the difference to allow the network timing difference between the first network (11) and the second network (12) to be reduced.

15

20

8. A system according to claim 7, wherein the first network (11) is arranged to change its network timing information in response to the sign of the difference between the timing information of the first network (11) and the second network (12) to reduce the network timing difference.

25

9. A system according to claim 8, wherein the first network (11) has a plurality of nodes (13) and the first network timing information is used to maintain synchronisation of the plurality of nodes (13), wherein the change in network timing information is sufficiently small to allow the plurality of nodes (13) to maintain synchronisation should one of the plurality of nodes not change its timing information in response to the sign of the difference communicated by the computer node (16).

30

35

5           10.       A method for allowing synchronisation of a first network (11)  
and a second network (12), the method comprising comparing  
network timing information for the first network (11) with  
network timing information for the second network (12), and  
communicating to the first network (11) the sign of the  
10       difference between the first network timing information and the  
second network timing information to allow the first network (11)  
to alter its network timing information to allow the network  
timing difference between the first network (11) and the second  
network (12) to be reduced.

15